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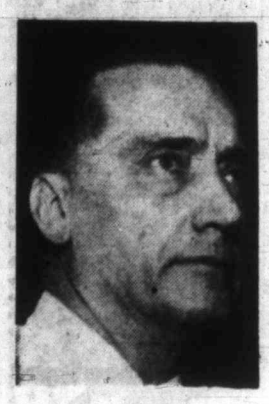
SECOND NEWS SECTION VICTORIA, BRITISH COLUMBIA, FRIDAY, APRIL 3, 1959

Socreds 'Ousted in Two Weeks' Briggs Predicted in November



H. LEE BRIGGS
. . . high standard

H. Lee Briggs predicted that the government of Premier Bennett would be forced out of office by the end of last November.

This was disclosed yesterday in the testimony of former B.C. Power Commission chairman T. H. Crosby to the Shrum royal commission.

Mr. Crosby told the commission: "At the time of his discharge (Nov. 15) Mr. Briggs made the statement that the present government was about to go out of office within two weeks. On what basis he made the statement, I don't know."

Dr. H. J. McLeod, another member of the power commission at the time, corroborated this testimony.

Mr. Crosby and Dr. McLeod were recalled briefly yesterday as witnesses to answer certain questions aimed at "putting the transcript into a clear and understandable state."

Mr. Crosby said during Mr. Briggs' service as general manager "he discharged his duties in very diligent and devoted fashion. In this business we don't look for anyone to be perfect, but Mr. Briggs' services were of a very high standard."

Mr. Briggs was fired, said Mr. Crosby, "when we felt he had exceeded his authority on the matter of refinancing and created a definite breach by contravening what he knew to be (commission) policy."

Dr. Shrum questioned both former power commissioners closely on charges of government pressure made by Mr. Briggs.

"I never worried much about it," said Dr. McLeod. "I was confident the matter of refinancing could be resolved, as it was subsequently. I felt the power commissioners were in a strong position. We could always resign."

He added that former power commissioner H. H. Griffin "resigned because of an expectation — I didn't think it necessary to resign on that point."

Following the storm kicked up over the Briggs charges of government interference in power commission affairs, both Mr. Crosby and Dr. McLeod did resign. Their resignations took effect Wednesday.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Eight Per Cent Boost Asked by Power Body

BCPC Chief Vetoes 'Sugar Daddy' Plan

By IAN STREET

B.C. Power Commission yesterday asked for an average increase of 8 per cent in power rates paid by its residential customers.

Acting general manager R. C. McMordie told the Shrum royal commission an "immediate upward revision" of rates is essential if the publicly-owned utility is to continue on a self-sustaining basis. (See other commission story on Page 30.)

The power body also asked for an average increase of 10 per cent in commercial power rates, and a 5.7 per cent increase in the general form of power rates.

TO MEET DEFICIT

Mr. McMordie said the additional revenue is necessary to meet a forecast deficit of $3,400,000 for the next two years.

Dr. Gordon Shrum asked for the general manager's reaction to a suggestion that the government "act as banker," guaranteeing the $750,000 deficit expected this year, which could then be taken out of power commission reserves.

SUGAR DADDY?

"I would be afraid for the future of the whole power commission," said Mr. McMordie. "It has always been run as a business enterprise. I don't like the idea of the power commission having a sugar daddy standing behind it."

"You have one already," retorted Dr. Shrum. "The government backs your bonds."

"They handle our bonds for us," said Mr. McMordie. "But we've always paid our way and hope to continue to do so."

"IMPRUDENT"

Mr. McMordie said in his brief it was considered "imprudent"—as a measure of avoiding any increase in rates—to charge the forecast $3,400,000 deficit against the present total of about $3,000,000 in reserve funds.

Under its terms of reference the Shrum royal commission is required to report on the necessity—if any—for a power rate increase to BCPC customers.

AT THE LATEST

Mr. McMordie said the proposed rate change should become effective not later than June 1, and asked for the royal commission report on rates "at the latest" by April 30.

Dr. Shrum said any recommendations concerning rate changes would be in the form of an interim report. Final report on the royal commission inquiry into B.C. Power Commission operations isn't expected until some time in July.

MORE ACCURACY

The royal commission chairman said he would like to be convinced that forecast deficit was more accurate than that prepared for last year's operations of BCPC.

"This bothers me, as a layman," said Dr. Shrum. "If you were $900,000 out in your forecast for last year, how do we know this is not likely to happen again?

LITTLE NAIVE

"This commission wouldn't like to recommend a rate increase and then find in a year's time that we'd been a little naive."

An earlier forecast prepared by the power commission put the deficit at about $6,500,000 and it was on this basis that the government was asked to approve a rate increase of 12 per cent. The request was refused.

Seen In Passing

AL CLARK

★ ★ ★

Al Clark getting boats lined up and ready for an auction sale. (He is floor man for a city auctioneer. He and his wife **Mary** have two children, **Debra**, 2, and **Beverley**, seven months. His hobbies are swimming, boating and golfing) . . . **Frank Hunter** welcoming real spring weather by walking to work coatless . . . **Doug Chorlton** all ready for the coming forest fire season . . . **Val Rose** enjoying her lunch hour . . . **Gil Chilton** pushing his car . . . **Dr. Lorne Ebel** talking about trees . . . **David Acton** making a bet.

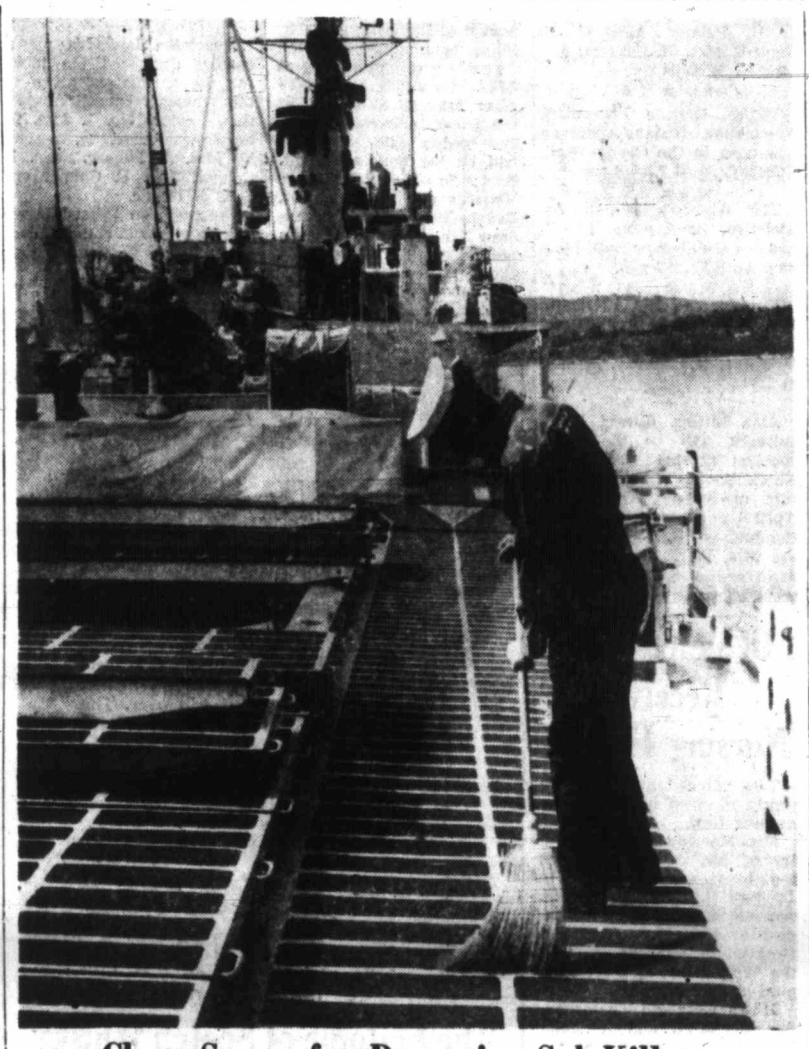
City Float Gets Boost

City council finance committee yesterday recommended addition of $500 to $1,000 already set aside for a city float in the Victoria Day parade, so that the float could be sent to the Pacific National Exhibition and the Seattle Seafair parades.

To Attend Assembly

Some 400 Jehovah's Witnesses from the Greater Victoria area leave today for the three-day semi-annual circuit assembly at Nanaimo.

More than 2,000 delegates from all parts of Vancouver Island are expected to attend the gathering in the centennial building at Exhibition Park.



Clean Sweep for Departing Sub-Killer

Doing his share to make RCN's newest Restigouche - type destroyer - escort, HMCS Kootenay, tidy for departure today is ABQM Stan Laughlin. Ship sails via Panama today to join East Coast squadron. Equipped with latest electronic devices, Kootenay is designed especially to combat foes under the sea and in the air. Torpedoes which home on their target make up formidable portion of her armament. —(Colonist photo.)

Burning Outdoors? Better Get Permit

Victoria city residents must now obtain new permits for all outside fires, including covered incinerator fires, Fire Chief Frank Bayliss said yesterday.

The permits, valid until the end of September unless suspended temporarily in the dry season, can be obtained at the main firehall.

No Meters

Tickets Puzzle Parkers

Quite a few Victoria drivers were puzzled and unhappy to receive parking tickets yesterday. Most of them didn't know why.

In several sections of downtown Victoria parking meters have been removed for the underground wiring project. Later, temporary paving has been put in over the cavities, leaving curb space but no meters.

USED TO BE

The unhappy drivers are those who have parked in these spaces, where they knew meters used to be.

Here's the catch:

The city parking bylaw specifies that no vehicle shall be parked in the metered portion of Victoria except at a meter.

No meter, no parking; police say that's why the tickets went out.

Cemetery Fund Urged

City council will be asked to allocate $5,000 this year as the nucleus of a fund, with subscriptions from other sources, to develop and maintain Ross Bay Cemetery as a burial park of the Royal Oak type.

The other subscriptions would come from families and descendants of persons buried at Ross Bay, churches which have used large sections of the cemetery, and the federal government because of a large number of soldiers' graves.

PROUDFOOT'S WORK

This plan, largely the result of work by Ald. D. J. Proudfoot, was discussed in general terms yesterday by city council's Ross Bay Cemetery committee, and Ald. Proudfoot said it would be put "in concrete form for the next meeting" for presentation to city council.

Many pioneer families, he said, would be willing to give subscriptions to see the job of developing the cemetery, now "a bit of a mess," done properly. He said he knew of at least 50 families willing to make substantial donations.

A Slide in the Sun

Spring sunshine brought these happy youngsters out to play in Banfield Park yesterday. Hoping that fine weather is here to stay this time are, starting at the bottom, Thelma Duncan, 5; Kathy McDonald, 5; Margaret Minnis, 5; Normie Anderson, 4; Cindy McDonald, 4; Darlene Duncan, 9; Virginia Kay, 7; Linda Erdman, 9, and Wendy Anderson, 9. —(Colonist photo.)

Bingo Pot Now $550

Jackpot in the Victoria Optimist bingo jumped to $550 last night when 1,300 players failed to click for a $500 main prize.

Next bingo will be held April 30 in Central Junior High School auditorium with a total prize list of $1,200.

Last night's $200 game was split between two winners, Mrs. Lillian Gustafson, 949 Aral Road and Robert Treadwell, 979 Thomas.

DUNCAN—Herbert Francis Stephens, well-known logger for more than 30 years in this district, was buried here yesterday. He was 57. He is survived by his widow, a son an two daughters.

Logging, Falls

Four People Hurt In Odd Accidents

Odd accidents were responsible for four injured being rushed to hospital yesterday.

James E. Grant, of 4877 Wesley Road, Saanich, is in good condition at Royal Jubilee Hospital, where he was taken after his left leg was broken in a logging accident on his farm.

He was using a horse to haul nine-foot logs out of the bush, when a log caught on a snag, flipped around and broke his leg.

The accident happened at the bottom of a ravine, inaccessible by ambulance, and splints had to be applied before the injured man could be moved out by stretcher.

Mrs. Esther H. Dance, 82, of 33 Glebe Terrace, is in satisfactory condition in Royal Jubilee Hospital, where she was taken after she fractured her left shoulder in a fall against a barricade at Douglas and View, at 4.25 p.m. yesterday.

FALL IN SHOWER

A Vancouver visitor, Ian Davidson, was treated for arm cuts at St. Joseph's Hospital after he fell while taking a shower in his apartment at Victoria Auto Court.

Police said the man dropped a shampoo bottle when he slipped and was cut when the bottle broke.

STAIR MISHAP

Robert Jones, 67, of room 12, New England Hotel, received treatment for an injured hand at Royal Jubilee Hospital, after he fell down a stairway at the hotel at 3.45 p.m. yesterday.

Appeal Notice Filed For Marine Pilot

Notice of appeal against conviction of B.C. marine pilot Patrick Norman Morrison, South Burnaby, sentenced at the current assizes in Victoria to six months for criminally negligent driving, will be filed today in the B.C. Court of Appeal.

The 35-year-old pilot was charged following the death of Capt. William Boyce, also from the mainland, of injuries suffered in a traffic accident here last Aug. 21.

The jury's verdict was accompanied by a strong recommendation for leniency.

Alan B. Macfarlane, Morrison's defence lawyer, said yesterday an application for bail will be filed in Vancouver, Monday.

Stalls $1,000 Each

Market May Move To Arena Location

Possibility of having a farmer's market at the Memorial Arena one or two days a week after the public market building is demolished will be studied by city council finance committee.

The committee decided yesterday to ask arena manager Joseph Dukowski for his ideas on the subject, after discussing placing light stalls on the parking lot which is to be built on the market building-firehall site.

Assistant city engineer Roderick Clack said he estimated such stalls would cost about $1,000 each, and Mayor Percy Scurrah said he had "certain reservations" about spending $10,000 to $15,000 to place stalls on the parking lot.

If the city sold the property for some development, the investment would be lost, he suggested. Mr. Clack said, however, that the stalls would be removable.

Picnic Tables, Parking

Goldstream Camps Open to Public May 1

Goldstream Park campsites and picnic grounds will be open for public use on May 1, recreation department officials said yesterday.

A water system is now being installed in the campsite area which is behind the Goldstream Inn alongside Goldstream River. It contains 147 camping areas.

The picnic grounds which will include 46 picnic tables and two large parking areas is further north off the Island Highway where most people go to see the spawning salmon in the fall.